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LETTER DATED 5 APRIL 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose herewith a statement by my Government on the current situation in Burundi, issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation on 31 March 1995 (see annex).

I would kindly request your assistance in circulating the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Daudi N. MWAKAWAGO
Ambassador

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Annex

Statement by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania on the current situation in Burundi issued on 31 March 1995

The latest reports on the situation in Burundi, particularly in the capital of Bujumbura, are highly disturbing. The reports indicate a marked deterioration in the country's security, with violence and politically motivated killings increasingly becoming the order of the day.

As a neighbour, Tanzania is deeply concerned about these tragic developments, which could easily plunge Burundi into another bloodbath too ghastly to contemplate.

Tanzania, therefore, condemns in the strongest terms possible the continued ethnic killings of innocent people being perpetrated by armed extremists. The use of force, under whatever pretext, to suppress the democratic yearnings of the people of that country is totally unacceptable and cannot be tolerated.

In this regard, Tanzania strongly urges the extremists, within both the army of Burundi and the civil society, to stop the killings immediately and instead adhere to the Convention on Governance of 10 September 1994 (S/1995/190, annex), which constitutes a firm framework for national reconciliation.

Similarly, Tanzania calls on the international community to take urgently all appropriate measures to create the necessary conditions within that country for the effective and proper functioning of the Government of Burundi in order to allow it to restore peace and democracy. It also appeals to the Government of Rwanda to receive Rwandese refugees fleeing Burundi.

Owing to the deterioration of the situation, over the past few weeks alone, more than 40,000 refugees from Burundi have crossed the border into Tanzania. In addition, over 100,000 Rwandese refugees who were in camps in northern Burundi are fleeing towards Tanzania, contrary to established international customary practice whereby refugees are not readily allowed to seek re-migration to a country other than the first country of asylum.

This has seriously increased the burden of caring for the large number of refugees currently in the country, now numbering over 700,000 a situation which is gradually becoming unbearable, especially bearing in mind the gradual depletion of food stocks of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, destruction of the environment, the deterioration of the security situation between the refugee camps and the villagers in north-western Tanzania and the overall costs of the whole refugee operation. In this context, Tanzania appreciates the assistance so far provided by the donor countries, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system.

In view of the gravity of the situation, Tanzania has decided to take appropriate security measures to deal with the influx of refugees into the country by closing its border with Burundi. The Government of Tanzania has advised the Governments of Rwanda and Burundi and the relevant United Nations

agency about this action, which has been taken to deal with the critical situation created by the large number of refugees living in huge camps in the Ngara and Kragwe districts.

The Government hopes that normal cross border activities will continue as usual.